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FM AMEMBASSY THE HAGUE

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C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 01 OF 02 THE HAGUE 002579

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TAGS: PREL EUN NL

SUBJECT: NETHERLANDS/EU: DUTCH ON DECEMBER 11-12 GAERC

ISSUES

REF: A. A) STATE 195944

- 1B. B) THE HAGUE 2564
- 1C. C) THE HAGUE 2550

Classified By: Political Counselor Andrew J. Schofer; reasons 1.4 (b) a
nd (d).

11. (C) SUMMARY: On December 7, POLCOUNS was briefed by Jeroen Boender (Deputy European Correspondent, MFA) and Koes Dijkstra (MFA Department of European Integration) on Dutch positions for the upcoming December 11-12 GAERC (ref A). Boender and Dijkstra anticipated enlargement questions, particularly Turkey, would dominate the meeting. Other issues on the agenda will include the Western Balkans (the Dutch will continue to insist on full Serbian cooperation with ICTY), the Middle East (where the Dutch see some slight grounds for optimism), Iran (the Dutch hope to send a clear signal on Iran's need to comply with UNSC and IAEA obligations), Afghanistan (where the EU can and should do more "as the EU"), and the China Arms Embargo (no change in the Dutch position.) END SUMMARY.

Enlargement/Turkey

13. (C) Dijkstra stressed that the Dutch are, in general, "satisfied" with the current enlargement strategy, and will resist moves to add any new states to the list of potential members without a thorough review of broader EU goals and capabilities. He said the Dutch will continue to insist that any states currently in line for possible membership -- including Turkey and Croatia -- will be expected to stick scrupulously to all existing criteria, but that no "new obligations" should be created. With regard to Turkey, Dijkstra noted that Bot was under considerable pressure from Parliament (ref b) to support a suspension of negotiations but insisted that the Dutch would not support this "undesirable" outcome. The Dutch would, however, support sending a "strong signal" to Ankara on the need to meet its commitments, which could include a European Council decision to postpone opening of "some chapters."

Western Balkans

14. (C) According to Boender, NATO's decision to offer PFP status to Serbia will not change the long-standing Dutch demand that Serbia cooperate fully with the ICTY as a precondition to any movement toward EU membership. In general, Boender did not expect much progress on Western Balkans issues at the upcoming GAERC.

Israeli-Palestinian Issues/Lebanon/Syria

¶15. (C) Boender said that FM Bot was "slightly optimistic" regarding the region as the result of his positive discussions with counterparts at the EUROMED meeting in Tampere and Hamas' declaration of a ceasefire. At the same time, however, the Dutch were "realistic" that any windows of opportunity could close quickly, so would urge the EU to step up its activity within the Quartet. Boender said the Dutch would also support measures intended to shore up the Sinoria government in Lebanon against Syrian pressure.

Iran

¶16. (C) Boender anticipated the GAERC discussion on Iran would be brief, as the major action remains in New York with the Security Council. He noted, however, that the GAERC provided another good opportunity to send a clear message to Iran that it should comply with UNSC and IAEA obligations or face "inevitable" sanctions, but did not speculate as to whether such a message would be approved.

Afghanistan

¶17. (C) Noting that the EU is already involved in Afghanistan through the actions of individual member states and the financial support of the Commission, Boender argued that the EU should now take a more active and public role "as the EU." A fact finding mission was in Afghanistan now looking at possible niches for the EU to fill; according to Boender, the

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area of police training looked particularly promising.

China Arms Embargo

¶18. (C) Boender stressed that the Dutch supported approving the Code of Conduct (CoC) but did not link this directly to lifting the Arms Embargo on China, as advocated by France. He observed that it would be "unfortunate" if French insistence on the linkage made it impossible to approve the CoC, since the latter was a useful tool in its own right. He made clear, however, that the Dutch -- "and 23 other states" -- all viewed any lifting of the Arms Embargo as premature (see also ref c.)

ARNALL